

FUTURE

NAMIBIA

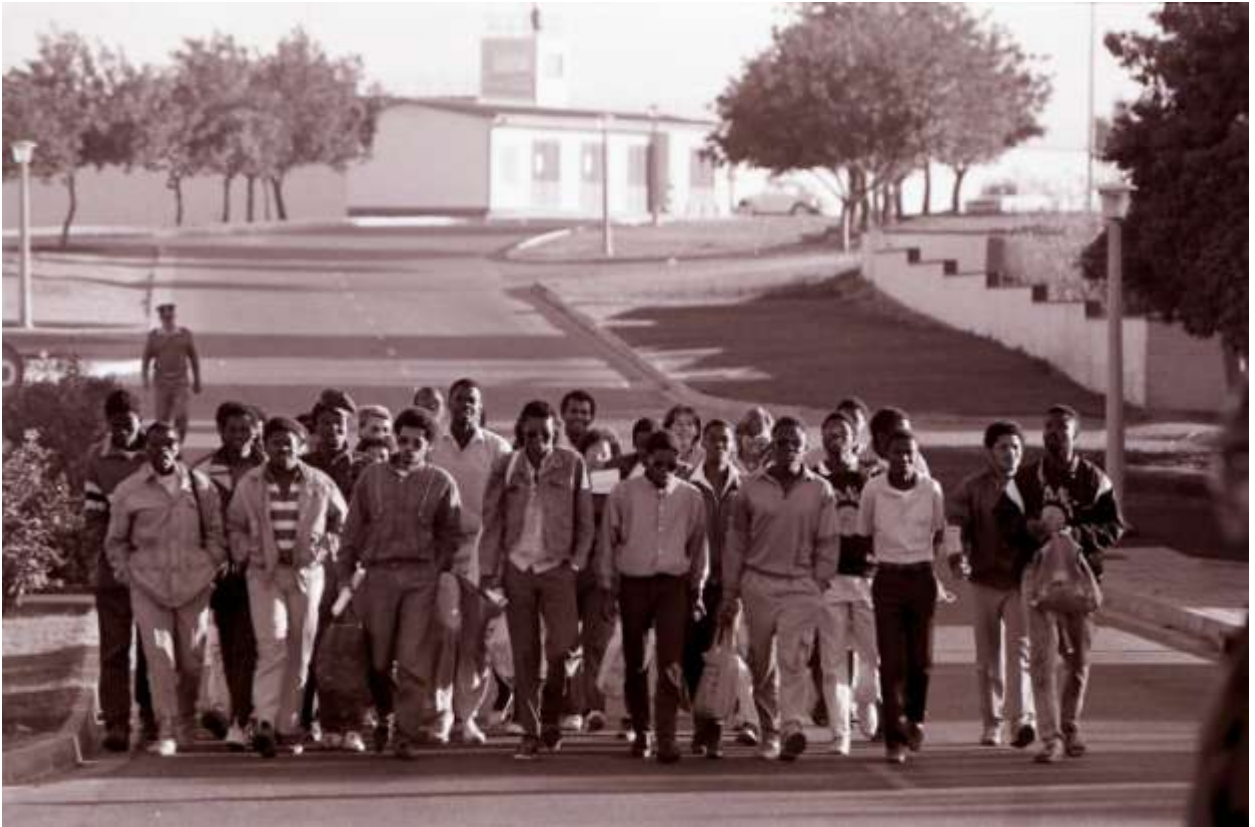


Photo: John Liebenberg

My Beloved Land

By MILTON LOUW

Foreword by Andimba Toivo ya Toivo

Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank all the people who love Namibia and see a wonderful future for this country. Many of the discussions and constructive criticism ensure this will continue to be a project that will improve through time.

This book would not have been possible without the guidance, advice and encouragement from Dr Detlef Frommann. Dr. Frommann is the owner of Creditreform Düsseldorf Frommann KG, a business information company in Germany. The company specialises in credit risk management and provides business and consumer information for the B2C (business to consumer) sector. Dr Frommann is also the owner of the Guestfarm Okomitundu in the Karibib District close to Otjimbingwe, the first colonial capital of Namibia.

Detlef and I met in 1999 and have been working on the development of a central register system for Namibia and the SADC region. This has been a time consuming effort that included a more than a years training in Germany and continued efforts to convince the Namibian government departments and institutions about the benefits of a citizens and business central register.

The first personal question I remember Detlef asking me was, "Since when have you wanted to be President of Namibia?"

Rather than answer the question of when, this book answers the question of the Future Namibia I would like to be the President of.

I also wish to thank Andimba Toivo ya Toivo for taking the time to read the first draft of the book and writing the foreword. As the founder of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), he has inspired many Namibians to fight for the political freedom of this country. His words re-inforced my belief that such a book is necessary in our country at this time as we continue the fight for economic and social freedom of our people.

Lastly, I thank the people of Namibia. You are the "Future Namibia".

Why did I write this book?

Namibians have a lot to be proud of. It is one of the most spectacular countries in terms of scenery and wildlife. In addition, it has enormous mineral wealth.

The most important ingredient of this country however, is its people. Namibians have emerged from decades of colonialism and apartheid rule to become one of the most integrated societies in the world. Regardless of social, economic or political background, Namibians are proud of their country.

As a child of Independence, having raised the flag of Namibia over Windhoek the morning of 21 March 1990, I am grateful for those who went before me to ensure the quality of life we can all enjoy.

I have been trained in investment promotion, or in plain words, marketing of Namibia to outsiders. This has had its share of success and failure, but more importantly given me the chance to study the people, the landscape, the business sectors, history and so much more.

This book is the result of my experiences and study of the best system for making this country even better for us, and our generations to come. While preparing the book I was looking for a basis on which to write. The best structure, I believe, has been to write this book as a “Business Plan for Namibia”. Accordingly, I looked at:

- Management (Government, Legislature and Executive)
- External and Internal Environments (PEST analysis)
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)
- Marketing planning (through segmentation and targeting) to find the best value proposition
- Forecasting

In all these, I looked for the best result achieved in other countries such as China, Germany, France, Netherlands, Japan, USA, etc and adapted it to our specific situation.

Throughout this book I also looked at how to integrate technology into our systems and daily lives. I have struggled to find a term for this and the best I could find was “Progress through Technology”, or in German, “Vorsprung Durch Technik”. I prefer to use the German expression because in German the word “Technik” not only means technology, but also the *technique* of studying and mastering the skills of something.

My conclusion is that in Namibia, discrimination is not based only on race, culture, gender, or geographical location, but more importantly in access to services (and technology).

Just as in any business plan, this book is not set in stone. It is a work in progress that will develop and change to reflect the changes in our society. I hope that you the reader, will not only read, but become a participant in creating this vision of “Future Namibia”.

Future Namibia Mission Statement

“Develop the tools and systems to assist the management of Namibia (government, civil society and private sector) in providing access to services and technologies to allow maximum quality of life to all who live here.”

Milton Louw
14 August 2011

Table of Contents

Foreword by Andimba Toivo ya Toivo	10
Chapter 1: Who is Milton Louw?	12
Before I was born	12
Growing up	12
University Life	14
The Internal Struggle in the 1980's	15
Work Experience.....	16
Why Black Economic Empowerment is needed in Namibia	17
White business versus Black business	17
Consultancies	19
Family / Personal	20
Sport.....	20
Politics.....	20
Religion.....	21
Objectives.....	21
My Future.....	22
Chapter 2: Forming the future.....	23
Legislative.....	23
Problems with lawmaking.....	24
Making our laws – Namibian Parliament	25
Financing of Political Parties	25
Is there a need for another party in Namibia?	26
Judiciary	26
Small Claims Court.....	27
Minimum Knowledge for a Citizen	27
Creating a common memory for Namibians.....	28
We Remember: Before, Now, and Later.....	28
And what is it to be a good citizen?	29
Chapter 3: Improving services for Citizens	30
Planning a Government.....	31
Re-engineering the Public Service	31
Other Institutional Bodies	34
Anti-Corruption Commission	34
Study proves corruption is less profitable.....	35
Effective Programme against Corruption	35
Government Service Directories	35
E-governance in Namibia.....	36
Chapter 4: A Central Register for Namibia	37
Central Register for Namibia	37
Register of Residents	37
Register of Marriage Contracts	38
Register of Business.....	39
Register of Professions.....	39
Register of Property Ownership (land & vehicles).....	39

Land Register	39
Vehicle Register	40
Register of Licences for Natural Resources and Utilisation	40
Register of Trademarks, Patents and Copyright	40
Register of External Trade	40
Register of Court Sentences, Proceedings, Declarations	40
Register of Bankruptcies and Insolvencies	41
Register of other legal entities	41
Register of Wills	41
How will a Central Register help the economy grow?	41
Legislation for informational privacy	42
Data Protection Act	42
Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations	43
Freedom of Access to Information Act	43
Need for Credit Bureau Legislation in Namibia	43
A new look at credit law	46
Preparation for the creation of a business information system for Namibia	46
Background	46
Training in Creditreform Düsseldorf	47
National Awareness	47
Legislation	48
Clients	48
National Credit Register	48
Conclusion	49
Chapter 5: Neighbours and Friends	50
Can friends criticise?	50
Promoting Foreign Investment	51
Creation of the Offshore Development Company (ODC)	51
Our Big Brother – South Africa	53
The Bad	54
The Difficult	54
The Foreign Experts	54
Getting help in growing our economy	55
Namibia and BRICSA	55
Our relationship to China	56
Market Branding Namibia	56
Chapter 6: Working together	58
The past is with us	58
Workers	58
Managers as workers	59
Employees and their Unions	59
IT Workers	60
Unions today	61
Employers	61
The future between Employers and Employees	62
Increasing employment - the Government dilemma	62
The Age Difference – Generation gap	63

ACORN Imperatives.....	63
How do we classify Namibian by age group?.....	65
Human Resources Definitions	66
Chapter 7: Trade and Industry	67
Promoting Innovation	67
Small and Medium-sized Enterprises	68
SME Assessment Study recommendations.....	69
Namibia-wide Business Census	69
NamBizDotCom Surveys.....	70
Entrepreneurship Myths	72
Entrepreneurial Development in Namibia	73
Enterprise Namibia Foundation	73
What are the Entrepreneurial Skills?	73
Strategy for SME Development.....	74
Entrepreneur Identification Programme.....	74
One-Stop Shops.....	75
Super's Theory	75
Industrial Development.....	76
Build Operate Transfer.....	77
Chapter 8: Learning throughout our lives	79
Foundation of Education.....	79
Primary Education.....	79
Information and Communication Technologies	79
Influence of teachers	79
Education in Ethics	80
Private Institutions of Learning.....	81
Life-Long Learning.....	82
Traditional or Protean Career Paths	83
Chapter 9: Using our Resources.....	84
Utilising our land	84
Morning exercise shared with the animals.....	84
Legitimate selling of Game meat	85
Agriculture	85
Tourism.....	86
Lodge Couples	87
Internet and Tourism.....	87
Mining.....	87
Fisheries	89
Chapter 10: Information and Communication Technology	91
Role of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies.....	91
Telephony and Cellular Communications.....	91
Number Portability.....	93
Newer and newer technology.....	93
E-commerce	94
ICT in Namibia	95
Chapter 11: Stay Healthy, live longer	97
To Brad and Angelina, a girl, born in Namibia.	97

Healthcare in Namibia	97
Electronic Patient Records	98
Financing the Healthcare programme	98
National Pension Plan	98
Chapter 12: Crime and Punishment	99
Effective combating of crime.....	99
Prostitution	101
Chapter 13: Sharing the wealth	102
Local Economic Development (LED)	102
Local Service Directory	104
Chapter 14: It belongs to all of us	106
State-Owned Enterprises.....	106
Chapter 15: Everything is business	108
I am a business	108
Business Organisations in Namibia	109
Chapter 16: Non-Government Organisations	111
Not-for-profit can still be a business.....	111
Chapter 17: Put money under the mattress	113
Understanding Banking.....	113
The downside of Credit.....	114
Training of Debt Counsellors.....	115
A new look at credit law	116
Consumer Rights.....	117
Legal Insurance for Namibians	118
What can consumers do?.....	119
Chapter 18: Who am I? Who R U?	121
Differences in Namibia	122
On being Coloured.....	123
Rights of women	124
Rights of Children.....	126
Rights of the elderly.....	127
Integration	129
Levels of integration	129
Personal Acceptance	130
Marriage	131
Neighbourhood / Local integration	131
National Integration	131
Regional Integration.....	132
International	132
Namibia and Integration.....	132
Chapter 19: Namibia Today, Tomorrow	133
Chapter 20: The Future	136
Creating a better future, Today	137
Annexure.....	139
What is IT and ICT?.....	139
Public Access to ICT's.....	140
Introduction.....	140

Methodology	140
Findings.....	140
Success Factors	140
Recommendations	141
Rights of victims	141
Quotes that inspired me.....	145
Back of the book	150
Endnotes.....	151

Foreword by Andimba Toivo ya Toivo

I feel very much honoured to be asked to write a foreword to this book by a political and economic researcher about our country and our times. The author of this book has spent many years studying the political and economic set up of our country. In my opinion, he has come up with many constructive ideas that can contribute to Namibia's development.

During the liberation struggle, we were building our sand castles and dreaming of how we wanted an independent Namibia to be. After we took the reins of power, we realized that it was not so easy to realize our dreams. It became apparent that even if the leaders of the government have good ideas, they cannot implement programmes and projects alone, but must rely on the commitment of civil servants to work in the interest of the Namibian people. As we set about to transform a system that has been based upon apartheid and colonialism, we were also challenged to transform the thinking of some staunch supporters of the old regime whom we had inherited as civil servants. These were not easy tasks, and we undoubtedly made mistakes. This was to be expected, because in life, one cannot completely avoid mistakes, and as politicians, we had no formula for how to build a prosperous and stable new nation.

One of our biggest shortcomings is that we have not been able to develop our economy to provide sufficient employment opportunities for our young people. It is pathetic to drive around the streets and to see young people standing along the side of the road from early morning, waiting for a Good Samaritan to give them any type of work. It is also disturbing that even some young people who have obtained university qualifications, either in Namibia or abroad, are not productively employed.

We know that this problem cannot be solved simply by ensuring that employers have capital and equipment to build their businesses. Their business cannot grow without appropriately-skilled workers. It is obvious that we must think "out of the box" and test new solutions to the problems of unemployment and underdevelopment in order to eradicate the plague of poverty in a country that has every possibility of becoming prosperous.

Fortunately, we have intellectuals outside the government who follow national developments closely and with a critical eye. The author of this book is one such person. Milton Louw has been observing and studying the progress made by political leaders of our country and has now come forward to share his insights and recommendations for governance, economic and social development and for how to avoid mistakes in the future. I am proud that we have Namibians who have the courage and the discipline to develop their ideas and to bring them to a public arena for consideration.

I am particularly impressed that Mr. Louw has made proposals for: greater transparency in governance; education of young people in morality and ethical behaviour; expansion of consumer rights; promotion of information and communications technology; measures to nurture entrepreneurship and to support business development; and strengthened social protection of vulnerable people. Because he is outside government, he may not be aware that some of his proposals are similar to government initiatives already in operation or in preparation.

We need not agree with every aspect of Mr. Louw`s broad-ranging analysis or with all his proposals in order to benefit from his ideas. I recommend that readers, including present and future political leaders, consider his ideas in the open manner that he has presented them. I hope that this will encourage more Namibians to bring to the public their ideas and proposals for how to better build our nation, though writing books and opinion articles and through scholarly research.

I commend Milton Louw for his efforts and hope that many will follow his example.

Andimba Toivo ya Toivo
13 May 2011

Chapter 1: Who is Milton Louw?

Before I was born

I was almost born a bastard. My parents got married less than two months before I was born. My mother, Pamela Du Preez, was a music teacher and my father, William Peter Louw, was just finishing school. They had met at a school in Athlone in the Cape Province of South Africa. However, once my mother was pregnant, they moved to Windhoek where my father's parents stayed. I was born on the 28th of December 1969 in Windhoek.

My past is rather a difficult one, in that much of it has been kept a secret from me. Only recently I found out, my father, the second of two sons, was not yet born when his father, a white man with the surname Oosthuizen, deserted my coloured grandmother (née Plaatjies). My father grew up with his maternal aunt who was married to a Louw, the surname he eventually adopted.

The family histories before this are also quite interesting. My maternal family goes back for eleven generations to when the first Du Preez got off the boat in Cape Town. Funnily enough, this forefather of mine had his son sentenced to exile in Mauritius because of political differences with the then Cape Governor. (He was released before being deported.)

On my father's side, his grandmother was coloured and married to a white man. To my knowledge, they had fourteen children and most of their dependants still stay in Windhoek and Walvis Bay. Some of my father's family include Oosthuizen, Plaatjies, Strauss, Green, Louw and Solomon.

As for me, I can tell you very little else, suffice to say, I know almost none of my Bantu grandmothers. It seems the history of my white forefathers overshadows theirs.

In a more serious vein, this problem often occurs even today in our society because most of our Bantu tribes did not have written histories. It is a pity as I would like to have known more about these women who have so greatly influenced my past, and the way I see the future.

Growing up

My mother and father lived in Windhoek until I was around 4 years old. My father had been working as an apprentice with the John Meinert Printing Company when he got into trouble with the law. One of the white female employees of the company used to drive the employees home after the evening shift and she would first drop off the black employees and then drop my father off last in Khomasdal, the coloured township. Unfortunately one night the police stopped the vehicle and were scandalised that a white woman was alone with a non-white man after dark. My father had no choice but to leave the country after this incident. We moved to Pietermaritzburg in the Natal Province of South Africa where my mother passed away in 1975.

When you are faced with a sad event in your life, you often blame God or the fates and cry "Why me?" Sad though this moment was in my life, looking back I realise that this created certain opportunities that would not have been there if I grew up in a traditional nuclear family. The most

important of these was that my brother, sister and I were brought up my grandparents in the city of Johannesburg, rather than returning with my father to Windhoek.

In Johannesburg, we lived on the 12th floor of an apartment block called Darragh House belonging to the Anglican Church, right next door to St. Mary's Cathedral. Desmond Tutu (who became Archbishop) was our landlord at the time and the apartment block was a venue for non-racial meetings in the 1970s and '80s. This was my first brush with the apartheid struggle though I understood little about it at the time.

I was most fortunate to be enrolled in a private school belonging to the Seventh Day Adventist Church and even more fortunate to be in a class of only five students – the norm was around fifteen students per class. This gave me an unparalleled head start in my learning career.

My grandparents moved to the suburbs of Alberton in 1979 and by the time I completed my primary school I was the Head-boy of the white school.

Unfortunately, I became a small-time thief and was quite regularly on the lookout for things I could steal. In 1985 I stole a wallet and found a bank card with the pin code on it. I withdrew some money and had a ball of a time. Being rather stupid, I also bought a computer on the credit card, AND, then had them deliver this computer to my home address!

Needless to say, I got caught and sentenced to 5 lashes with a light cane. I also had to leave Johannesburg and went to stay with my father in Windhoek. Once again something bad happened, but a new direction for my life was just around the corner.

When I started school at Dawid Bezuidenhout High School in 1986, it was just the beginning of the internal resistance by the pupils in South West Africa against the colonial Apartheid regime of South Africa. Coming from Johannesburg with a crime record made me an easy recruit for one of the leaders in the protests.

Luckily, I finished my schooling in 1987 with a high enough average to enter University; even though I was not able to speak Afrikaans when I arrived and all my subjects were taught in Afrikaans. Also, I was most fortunate to meet the most beautiful, kind girl in the whole world and she was my girlfriend for the last year of school. Even after twenty years, I can still say I love her, but that is for another story.

It was during my last year at school that I also found my second and still true love, “The written word.” It started as an expression of my feelings for my girlfriend through poetry, then to printing a school newspaper allowing us to see each other after school. Till today, I feel honoured to be able to write for the pleasure and enjoyment of others.

Here is one of my first attempts at poetry with a meaning:

My Philosophy on Life

What is the meaning of life?

If you know please tell me:-

Some say it's finding a compatible wife

Others: knowing how to help those in strife.

To me it means; - (1) being able to love
And having some special to receive it;
(2) Being able to worship the One above;
And (3) being remembered by those you love.

I've seen people trying the first and last
But never caring much for the second
As they want to live in the lane marked fast
And in so doing never really achieve happiness that can last

My next question would then naturally be
What are we doing to find meaning in life?
Why I ask is quite simple see,
Cause everyone only cares for "I; Myself and Me"
So how do I achieve it you ask?
I'm not sure but I'm trying real hard
And I must admit it's quite a hard task
But I'll keep with it till I'm put in a cask.

So why don't we all try
To achieve these three ideals
Cause then there'll be much less reason to cry
And none of us with the Devil will have to fry!!

The following section was added after the Foreword was written by Hon. Toivo ya Toivo. It was on the occasion of the 21st Birthday celebrations of Namibia's Independence.

University Life

Upon entering my first year at University (then called the Academy), it was clear there was a racial divide on campus. Most students would be sitting in groups of whites, or coloureds, damaras, girls, boys, etc. I was fortunate to befriend students who saw past these barriers and were intent upon their studies, and could debate on the politics of the day. In fact, we became part of the debates within the leadership and would often find ourselves in the minority on some of the issues when a vote was taken.

In one of the first votes, I remember being on the losing side – the debate was on the language used in the classes. For me, and my friends, we were sufficiently proficient in English and managed well. But some of our fellow students came from Afrikaans schools and sometimes struggled with the English. The Namibia National Student's Organisation (NANSO) insisted on English only and we were outvoted. Funnily enough, all my classes were in English anyway in the science faculty.

However, within the first three months of 1988, the situation had deteriorated within schools throughout the country due to the army camps being built next to school. The biggest issues were

the prevention of students attending classes and the regular rape or molestation of students by the South Africa army personnel.

This led to a consolidation of all students country-wide – including our students at the Academy.

The Internal Struggle in the 1980's

During the 1980's the battle for the hearts of the Namibian people was being fought. The PLAN combatants were waging war with their Angolan, Cuban and Russian allies, but this was taking place outside the borders of the country. Inside the country, the battle was in the form of protest and civil disobedience.

The internal struggle included famous Namibians such as Hendrik Witbooi, Danny Tjongarero, Niko Bessinger, Anton Lubowski, John Pandeni and Ben Ulenga. They were harassed, beaten and arrested continuously by the South African regime.

However, the regime felt it was winning. They had created ethnic authorities and many of these leaders had convinced the people of the need for managed democracy versus the communist take-over by SWAPO.

All that changed when the students started participating in the struggle. In 1987, the police were unable to control and prevent the students from running through Katutura and Khomasdal, with some of the marchers reaching the central business district. By mid 1988, the South African regime and their puppet government was losing control. Over 75 000 school students were boycotting schools throughout the country in protest at the South African army and police repressions. The boycotts began at the Ponghosi Secondary School in Ovamboland.

Laws such as the Protection of Fundamental Rights Act (No. 16 of 88) were being used to prevent the gathering of any kind. This specific law was contested by the Namibian National Students Organisation and others and was found to be unconstitutional. This legal battle is still used around the world when discussing human rights as it "creates criminal offences for activities which in democratic societies have been perfectly acceptable and legal."ⁱ

In legal literature, "The period of 1985 to Independence ... an historical prelude because it arguably sets the stage for the constitutional development that followed Independence."ⁱⁱ

Unfortunately, this internal struggle for Independence has largely been neglected during our literature. However, these students of this period are now starting to actively once again participate in the socio-political sphere, especially via Facebook and other social online media sites where they have a large influence among their peers, and the youth.

So once again, in 1988 I found myself in jail, this time for political reasons. The police arrested 37 students and kept the women in Windhoek, while the men were taken to Seeis. I will always remember my comrades from these days with great fondness. It was a time when I came to truly appreciate how valuable support is for one's own well-being.

The picture on the front of the book was taken upon our release.

Work Experience

After leaving the Academy of Tertiary Education (without completing my degree), I spent two years gaining experience in computing hardware, and started my own company. Being a non-white business in this field in Namibia was extremely difficult, and I became a member of the Windhoek Business Chamber - essentially a black chamber of commerce. I provided my services free of charge to this body as well as the umbrella organisation for chambers in Namibia, the Namibia National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NNCCI).

At this time, the white businesses belonged to the Windhoek Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WCCI) and the emerging businesses as well as some long-standing anti-apartheid businesses such as Woermann & Brock, joined the newly created NNCCI. The government was supportive of the NNCCI, but also wanted to see a united private sector voice.

The Secretary General at the time, Mr. Peter Bond, requested my assistance in the development of the chamber newsletter, the Namibia Business Journal, which was envisaged as monthly business publication for Namibian companies. I was later invited to join the staff during 1991 and had overall responsibility as editor as well as spearheading the membership drive.

The core leadership (mostly comprising business personalities that were in the country during the liberation struggle) realised in these early years that there was first a need to encourage returning business personalities to also become part of the movement. This “internal” business community consisted of names such as Matheus Shikongo, Navin Morar, Christie Bendade, Rick Kukuri, Oscar Norich, etc. spent their own money and lots of volunteer time to make the chamber movement a success.

To develop this united black business front, it was decided to identify the business leaders within the returning Namibians. I was privileged to meet many of these personalities and was especially impressed by the woman in business such as Joan Guriras, Sandy Tjitendero and Anne Gebhardt.

By the end of 1992, consultative meetings were at an advanced stage but some of the participants on both sides still distrusted each other. For me the pivotal point was when, as the Acting-Secretary General (for a period of three months during 1993 while the post was vacant), I received a personal letter from the State President, Sam Nujoma. He requested me to nominate business leaders to travel with him on an investment promotion tour of the Scandinavian countries. With the letter, he requested, “... and for lack of a better word, also white business representatives to accompany me...”.

Without approaching the Executive committee, and only consulting the President, I nominated a number of business personalities, including Mr. Harald Pupkewitz. I shall never forget him calling me personally to grill me about my family before accepting the invitation. This extended trade mission allowed many of the business leaders to interact with the new government, as well as black business representatives. This led to a much greater understanding between the parties.

Upon their return, all of these businesses, most notably Mr. Pupkewitz, supported a united chamber movement. It was thus only a formality before we had a single voice for business.

I worked in almost all departments at the NNCCI, and was trained during this period by an expatriate consultant in

- small business development;
- institutional development (policies and procedures);
- human resources management; and
- how to develop, and find funding, for developmental projects.

My last position was that of Head: Communications and Information - this was one of the developmental projects I jointly developed and submitted for funding.

Why Black Economic Empowerment is needed in Namibia

White business versus Black business

Namibia has gone through various political changes over the past two centuries. One thing however is always constant. Once the political change occurs, there is a realisation that political independence means very little without economic ownership change. When the English ruled over Southern Africa, they had the economic might. The Afrikaner took over and had to create state institutions such as the “Eerste Nasionale Ontwikkelings Korporasie” (*ENOK or First National Development Corporation*) to allow Afrikaner businesspersons to get a share of the economic pie. They also created other institutions that should be supported by their people to become as powerful as the English ones, for example banks and insurance companies (Sanlam, Santam, etc.).

In much the same way, the black people of Namibia need to become participants in the economy. The first efforts were made in the early 1990’s to unite the two chambers of commerce, namely the Windhoek CCI and Windhoek Business Chamber. This resulted in the Namibia National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the predecessor of the present NCCI.

This was one of the most challenging times in my working life. The mistrust of decades had to be plastered over for the sake of the country and our newly created democracy. We succeeded.

HOWEVER, we only plastered over the problem. The black majority is still not participating in the meaningful way promised by the politicians. Or for that matter, the way the previous English and Afrikaner political movements allowed their voters to prosper.

In 1994, I was offered the job as the Namibian Delegate to the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation’s Investment Promotion Service in Paris, France. The Delegate of each country represented is responsible for:

- investment promotion campaigns;
- project development;
- preparation of feasibility studies;
- management of programme budgets; and
- joint-venture project development.

During this period, I had an opportunity to study and learn about the investment strategies of amongst others, Mauritius, China, India, Russia, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Algeria, Madagascar, Vietnam and Chile. Most of my colleagues were highly educated economists and were attached by

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